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To: ATR-Real Estate Workshop
Subject: Competition and Real Estate Workshop - Comment, Project No. V050015

I'm a real estate agent in Michigan and realize the importance of competition and welcome it because it keeps me on my toes. It forces me to do a better job and much more for my clients. Yes, folks should pay what they want but whose helping them protect their real estate investment when they do? Who's really telling them what they can get and what they are really getting, in terms of services. As an 18 year real estate veteran I have always charged the same amount. There are times when I must reduce my fee to help someone out but over the years my expenses have gone up, health insurance up 400%, advertising, gas, E&O insurance ect and I am expected to do much more due to all the law suits. Yet my fee has been the same for 18 years. My clients know what they are getting and they prefer to pay for it. They always say you get what you pay for. Fact is I am certified to do fee for service but if I did, my clients would end up paying Much more. Kinda like the difference between a new attorney and an experienced attorney. I have been involved with fee for service agents and low commission agents and found I was being asked to do things by the seller they "thought" their own agent was supposed to do. Honestly these sellers would have been better off getting their own real estate license rather than hiring these agents. This type of service creates a huge problem with agency laws. One I'm sure the DOJ has not even thought about.

Think about this ..recently we were involved with a DOJ employee who was being transferred. We were offered what they called" market commission" so much for not fixing a commission. We told the employee they should list between \$340,000 and \$345,000, the DOJ's relocation agent said \$379,000, the appraisal or buy out came in at \$350,000. Once the employee took the buyout and moved to their new location their home went on the market for \$339,000. Not with a discount agent, not with a fee for service agent, only with a "full service" agent getting paid "market commission" at a standard amount determined by the DOJ's relocation company. That's our tax dollars. Not only is the DOJ paying a 6% commission but they gave the employee \$10,000 over the list price.

I am not sure why the DOJ is all over the real estate industry about the fees we charge and don't charge or who's in and who's out. I do know that today real estate is Big Business and the consumer is being forgotten in all this. Rather than taking away services we should be adding services. The DOJ should be watching out for the general public like they watch out for their own employees. The largest investment and sometimes the only investment most folks have is their home. Yet there is no one watching out for them. Maybe the DOJ should start by using these types of real estate services first. That way they can speak from experience.

Cindy Knight